



**Interim Report from Globalization Task Force
Prepared for: March 12-13, 2015 Board of Governors Retreat**

Task Force Focus

The Globalization Task Force has met four times to date. The role of the Task Force is to develop a statement envisioning integration of globalization in all university endeavors in order for the campus community to compete, function and succeed in the worldwide environment/economy. The focus of the initial meetings has been to 1) inventory existing programs on campus that are focused on international issues; 2) evaluate how globalization fits into the university mission of public affairs, particularly focusing on cultural competence; 3) identify ways in which we can increase engagement of faculty and staff in improving and expanding international programs; and, 4) develop outcome measures that assess student learning with regards to cultural and intercultural competence. In future meetings, the task force will review the motivations for internationalization that generally fall into four major categories: 1) Academic—global (universal) search for truth and knowledge; 2) Socio-cultural—cross-cultural knowledge and understanding; 3) Political—maintain and expand influence; and, 4) Economic—improving local/national competitiveness in the global economy and marketplace.

Environment

Globalization is the rise of factors and forces that transcends borders and sovereign states. It alters and weakens political and economic boundaries, and intensifies the cross-border flow of nearly everything—but especially knowledge, ideas and learning. Globalization is aided and legitimized by the emergence of nearly instant communication and information sharing. Even though global forces are mediated through the local context, they in turn shape local cultures and economics. Those local entities that are unable to act effectively within the globalizing currents are disadvantaged as never before.

The number one workforce trend for the near future is a global battle for smart talent, which will be the top driver of competitive advantage, as skilled and experienced employees will be in demand. A second major trend is that a diversity savvy workforce will be required to understand and align with the diversity in the global marketplace. Global experience and cultural competency are increasingly becoming necessary skills for leaders and employees. Attracting and retaining talented workers in the future will require a new workforce that understands and promotes the use of transnational teams, online collaboration, globalization and business transformation. Cultural competence, language skills, and understanding and appreciating

diversity will be coupled with specific job-related skills to form the basic smart talent of the future.

Three million students worldwide now study outside their home countries a 57% increase in the past decade and is projected to increase to eight million by 2025. The challenge of globalization for American higher education is how each of the country's 2,200 four-year colleges and universities choose to confront the fact that higher education can no longer be confined within national borders and how this changing landscape will shape their future identities.

Internationalization of higher education is one of the ways a country responds to the impact of globalization. Easier travel, labor migration, the global spread of research capacity, globalization of scholarship, and the growth of the global higher education system reinforces an expansive multilateral trade of ideas. **For Missouri State University, this means that we need to create an environment that is international in character—in teaching, research, and outreach. It also means that our graduates must be workforce ready in an increasingly global and knowledge-based society. The dual challenge we face is the necessity to be globally engaged while remaining usefully connected locally.**

The Association of International Educators (NAFSA) defines internationalization as a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable outcome.

For many reasons, the vision of Missouri State University as a more internationally focused university is desirable. However, as we discuss our vision for internationalization at Missouri State, we need to bear in mind that there is growing discomfort with internationalization at many universities that stems from the need to balance two sets of drivers. On the one hand, internationalization is driven by the pursuit of the lofty goals and ideas of improving academic quality, increasing international understanding, and providing mutual benefits. On the other hand, internationalization is increasingly seen and used as a central lever of economic competitiveness in the knowledge economy and as a source of revenue. Critics of internationalization are concerned that internationalization is a process that turns education into a commodity, increases the brain drain, and may serve to reduce cultural diversity through the dominant role played by English.

Discussion Questions

To what level do we want to increase our international programming, engagement, and profile? What should we do to involve the entire University community in our international programming, engagement, and profile?